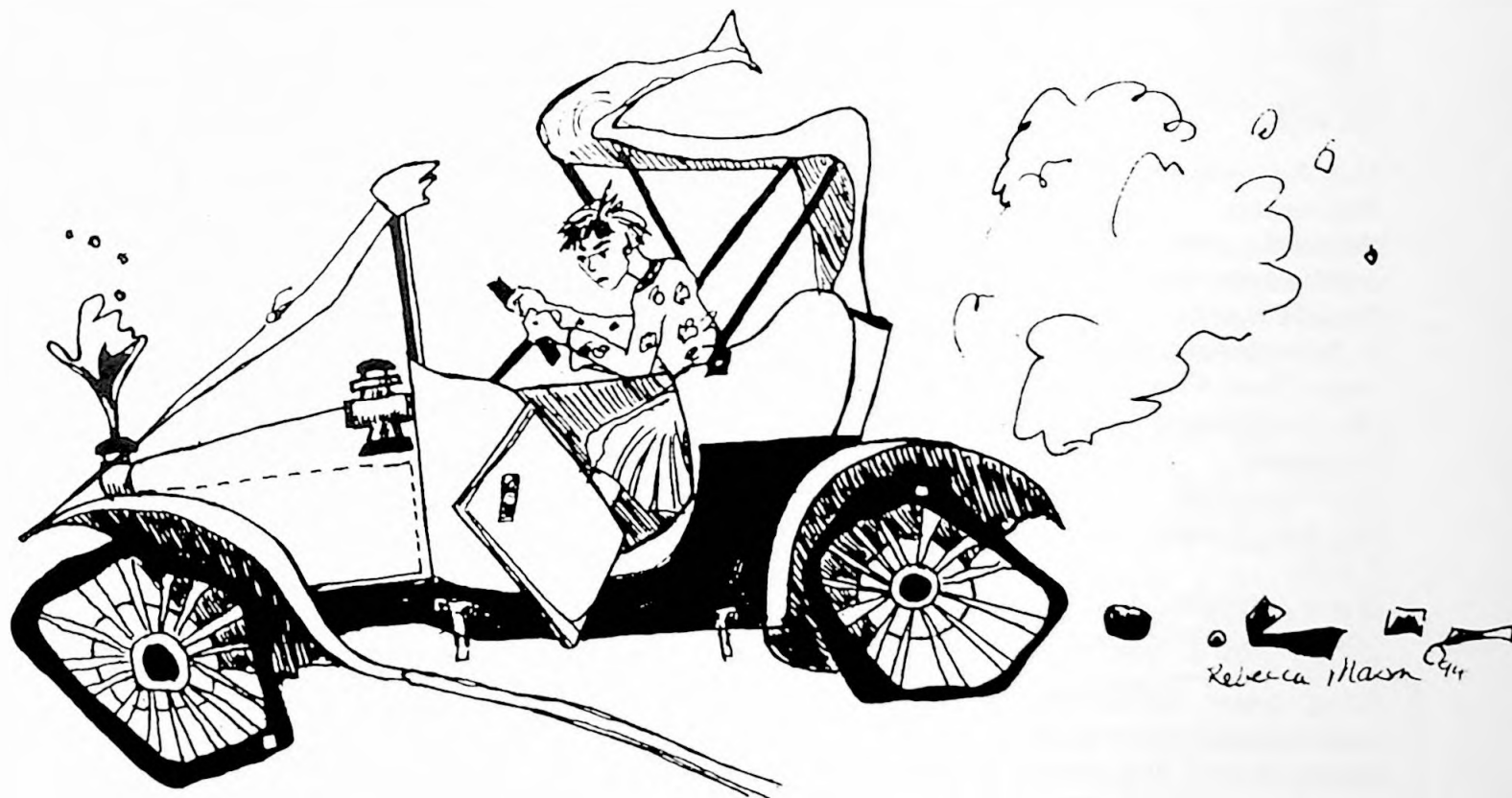


Ec-Sense



The Allergy and Environmental Health
Association of Canada
Association Allergies Santé et Environnement
du Canada
Ottawa



\$2.95

Spring/ Summer 1994

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Send your newsletter
submissions to: Eco-
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Deadline for Fall Issue:

October 15, 1994.

ISSN 1188-7788

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President's Message

Ontario Ministry of Health

On May 9, 1994, Ruth Grier, Ontario Minister of Health, announced \$2.5 million in funding for a research and treatment facility at Women's College Hospital in Toronto for persons with Environmental Sensitivity.

This is the first time the Ministry has acknowledged the need of persons with Environmental Sensitivity for diagnosis and treatment. Unfortunately, the Ministry has NOT addressed our need for an environmentally controlled unit (ECU) and for treatment across Ontario by physicians knowledgeable about this disability. We question how meaningful research can be done without such a unit (ECU).

Our Association has been invited to sit on the Clinical Research Advisory Board for the joint clinical/research program, which will hopefully allow our voice to be heard. However, we also need our members to write to Ruth Grier to express individual concerns, as well to address our more general concerns with respect to our need for access to treatment across Ontario and for such treatments to be covered under OHIP.

Another item of concern is the Quality Assurance Clause in the *Regulated Health Professions Act*, which gives the College of Physicians and Surgeons the ability to shut down physicians and alternative health care practitioners on little more than a whim. Please write Ruth Grier NOW to tell your story and your need to access these non-conventional services.

National

National has mailed the following issues of *The AEHA Quarterly*: Fall 1993 and Winter 93/Spring 94. If you have not received these issues, please let National know. Future issues should be on track.

Kathy Dickinson, Judy Spence and I represented our Branch at the AEHA National Annual General Meeting in Cambridge in May.

I was given the opportunity to present "Accommodating the Needs of Students with Environmental Sensitivity". Jeff Phillips, a child psychologist from North Bay, educated and entertained us. If you are interested in seeing what went on at National, a videotape is available.

Communications

An interbranch communication system has now been established to provide an interactive communication process with National. Bimonthly, all branches will submit information to National for an interbranch mailing. Sometime during alternate months, branch presidents will participate in a teleconference with our National President.

Congratulations and Thanks

Congratulations to Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, particularly Peter Russell and Virginia Salares, for the Research House for the Environmentally Sensitive, a most worthwhile project.

Our thanks to Gary Skillen and to Ed Lowans for their presentations on "Electromagnetic Radiation and Allergies" and "Healthy Schools". Although a videotape of Ed's presentation is available, if you missed Gary's presentation you'll just have to take our word for it - you missed a very educational and entertaining evening!

We wish you a pleasant summer and look forward to seeing you in the fall - renewed and refreshed and ready to offer your time and talents.

Elizabeth Stutt

Ottawa Researchs Dust and Mould

A 1988 survey of 15,000 parents of school children across Canada concluded that mould can make families ill and that respiratory problems were more prevalent in damp or mouldy homes.

Picking up where this survey left off, a group of Ottawa researchers will be conducting the most sophisticated study of its kind ever done. They will analyse how much dust and mould there is in each of 500 homes in Wallaceburg, Ont. (near Windsor). This small town was chosen because its population was involved in previous studies and is considered to be a representative sample. Records on health problems will be kept by the occupants.

This jointly-funded \$500,000 study (CMHC & Health Canada) brings together researchers such as Dr. Robert Dales, who in addition to working for Health Canada is also an associate professor of medicine and epidemiology at the University of Ottawa and a consulting physician in respiratory medicine at the Ottawa General Hospital; engineer Paul Butler of the Ottawa-based Magellan Engineering Consultants Inc.; Dr. David Miller, a fungus expert and a senior researcher with Agriculture Canada; and Jim White, a senior building research adviser at Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

Well-sealed modern houses set the stage for organisms such as dust mites, moulds and bacteria and their byproducts to thrive and build up. According to Dr. Dales, a damp home can harbour a very complex circular food chain involving creatures invisible to the naked eye. Mould colonies, for example, can grow on dust in the condensation that forms on patio doors, thus forming a grazing ground for bacteria. Dust mites then feed on the bacteria. Fecal dust created by the dust mites is a food source for the mould colonies, and so the system goes full circle. Endotoxins are


created by the bacteria and is known to make people ill.


Super-powered vacuums with filters and specially-designed pumps will be used to capture dust mites, dust samples, and air contaminants such as endotoxins.

The fungus research lab at Agriculture Canada is among the world's most sophisticated and all of the partners involved are developing technology that is leading the world, says Dr. Miller.

Jim White says that this type of good solid research will point out cause and effect and the results will change the way that houses are built and maintained. Building officials are advocating that airtight houses must be better-ventilated.

Send a \$3 cheque to CMHC, 700 Montreal Rd., Ottawa, K1A 0P7 to receive a copy of "Clean Up Procedures for Mould," by mail. In person, the cost is \$2. (Ottawa Citizen, 12 Feb 94.)





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Housing News

Clean Modular House for Canadians (CMHC) has been renamed Research House for the Hypersensitive. This modular model house, constructed with building materials, ventilation and heating systems suitable for the hypersensitive, will be officially opened to the public in September. The heating system is totally separate from the ventilation system and consists of hot water pipes under the ceramic floor (radiant heat) - (Pompeii revisited!) and includes a drying closet. It is tastefully decorated with 100% cotton window coverings and bed quilt. The wood furniture includes a beautiful custom made 100% cotton sofa. Special interest **groups** will be given guided tours during the summer months by appointment only - call CMHC at 748-2367. (A group consists of 6 to 12 people). AEHA members can have their name placed on a roster by calling Elizabeth at 825-8388 for either a summer or September viewing. The house is located on the grounds of Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) on Montreal Road in Ottawa. Innovative, avant-garde - a must-see for anyone interested in indoor air quality.

A source list of **local** suppliers (construction and furnishings) for the above will soon be in our library or can be obtained from CMHC.

Free publications: "**Building Materials for the Environmentally Hypersensitive**" will be out this summer and "**Diagnosing and Treating your Damp Basement**" is already available from CMHC Publications, 700 Montreal Road, Ottawa, K1A 0P7.

A video called "**This Clean House**" will be available this summer from CMHC for \$10. (plus tax, GST) by calling 748-2367. Indoor air quality expert, Oliver Drerup, takes you through a typical house, step by step, pointing out the possible sources of pollutants. Solutions to the problems are suggested.

(Citizen, 30 Apr 94).

La Maison du 21ieme Siecle est un nouveau bulletin specialise, publie 10 fois l'an, sur 12 pages. Vous trouverez dans ce bulletin de multiples informations inedites et extremement pertinentes, pour quiconque desire faire progresser sa pratique dans le sens du developpement durable, des informations exclusives en matiere de batiments sains et efficaces. Faire votre cheque au nom des Editions du 21ieme siecle, 11A Chemin Gagne, St-Donat, Qc. J0T 2C0. (819) 424-3555. Abonnement (taxes et frais de manutention inclus) \$62.43 (\$50 par annee pour un abonnement de deux ans et plus).

Green Standards for Homes: Since April, all new R-2000 houses must use more recycled and reused materials, such as cellulose insulation, which will be made entirely of recycled paper. The **new updated R-2000 standards** say carpeting must not cover more than 50% of the floor area, including the basement, unless it's glue-free or used without an underpad. Special low-toxic underpad can also be used. Carpets made of natural fibres such as wool or cotton, get the program's OK. Call Toronto (416) 447-0077 for a list of local R-2000 home builders. For a free-information package, call 1-800-387-2000. Ref: Ottawa Citizen, April 16, 1994.

Remember that wool carpets are treated with mothproofing. Carpets may also be contaminated with other pesticides in transit. Planes, trains and trucks are sometime fumigated.

Medical Update

Summer is here and people are heading to the cottage or on holidays away from cities. If you suffer from anaphylaxis and carry epinephrine medication, it would be wise to have on hand two or three of these injection needles. You should have on hand one injection for every 15 minutes needed to get to the hospital. Epinephrine injected too late will not help.

If a child is in the care of another, such as a baby sitter, a grandparent or a teacher, make sure they know the procedures to follow as well as the location of the nearest hospital. Know whether you are not in an area where an ambulance can be called. Remember, not every area is served by 911.

Obtain **written** correct procedures to follow from a reputable specialist on allergies. A parent package for school age **children with anaphylaxis** is available from AAIA for \$30 plus \$5 postage and handling (non-members). Call (416) 785-4684.

Warning: Expect a "pop" sound when injecting the epinephrine. People doing this for the first time (and obviously under stress) who are unaware of this sound have been startled and, at times, have pulled away losing the medication. If you have never used the injections, you may wish to practice injecting the medication into an apple when it is time to discard the medication due to the expiry date.

* * * *

LAMISIL (tablets & cream) is a new antifungal agent. When given orally, the drug concentrates rapidly in skin and nails at levels associated with fungicidal activity. It does not influence the metabolism of hormones or other drugs and the bioavailability is not affected by food. Patients should be on Lamisil for a period of 12 weeks for nail infections. It should be noted that patients with **pre-existing** stable chronic liver dys-

function or impaired renal function should receive half the regular dose of oral Lamisil and have liver function tests at baseline and periodically during treatment. Mothers receiving oral treatment should not breast-feed as Lamisil is excreted in breast milk. When tested, an increase in liver tumours was observed in male rats at the **highest** dose level during the life-time (123 weeks) carcinogenicity study; however, no such increase was seen in mice or monkeys. **Ingredients:** each round, whitish/yellow uncoated tablet, scored on one side and embossed "Lamisil 250" contains: terbinafine 250 mg, present as the hydrochloride salt. Non-medicinal ingredients: magnesium stearate; methylhydroxypropyl-cellulose; silica, colloidal anhydrous and sodium carboxymethyl starch; cellulose microcrystalline. (Thanks Nutri-Chem).

* * * *

A fungus called *sporothrix schenckii* found in sphagnum moss can enter the body through any small cut in the skin. The first symptom of the fungal disease is usually a raised red nodule, which may develop into a larger, sometimes painful ulcer, near the cut. A chain of more red nodules may later appear. Easily mistaken for dermatitis or stubborn sores, the condition can persist for months if it's not properly diagnosed and treated with oral doses of potassium iodide. As a preventive measure, it is recommended that gardeners wear gloves when handling mosses and soils. (Chatelaine June 94).

* * * *

Cases have been reported of people breaking out in **hives** after riding a **motor-cycle**. The seat cover was ruled out as the culprit. It was concluded that motorcycling's prolonged vibrations caused the patients' mast cells to rupture releasing histamine and other chemicals. (Better Homes, Mar 94).

Dental Fillings: Ontario Health Minister,

Ruth Grier, has asked the federal government to investigate the safety of silver mercury amalgam fillings. The fillings contain about 50% mercury, a poisonous heavy metal. The Canadian Dental Association say that mercury fillings pose no danger to patients, although a small percentage of people may have some sort of allergic reaction. Researchers at the University of Calgary conducted a study about 3 years ago and found mercury vapor escaping from fillings collected in the organs of sheep and monkeys. Germany's Health Agency now restricts the use of amalgams in pregnant women and young children. Ms Grier called on authorities to restrict use of the fillings if they are found to pose a health risk. (Citizen, 29 Jan 94).

* * * * *

Of **milk** and.....**brains**. In 1901, Einstein advised Mileva, pregnant with their first child, that the baby shouldn't be stuffed with cow's milk because it might make the baby stupid. Obviously, Einstein wasn't only ahead of his time in physics -his comment may, in fact, qualify him as the first clinical ecologist of the century! And he didn't even need a double-blind study to add 2 + 2! From *The Private Lives of Albert Einstein*.

* * * * *

"HORROR-MONES" - We would like to hear from members who have or are presently titrated for hormones (estrogen, progesterone, testosterone) or women who have been prescribed natural micronized progest-

erone by their gynecologist. Please call (825-4439) or write Estelle at 17 Andrea Crescent, Nepean, Ont. K2J 1G8.

* * * * *

Dr. Robert Buckman reported (TVO's Vital Signs, 21 April 94), on studies done at the Great Ormond Street Hospital, London Borough of Camden, on the relationship of **diet, hyperactive behaviour** and juvenile **crime** offenders. Some of Britain's top experts were involved in these studies. Dr. Eric Taylor, MRC Child Psychiatry Unit expressed the view that "the reaction will be hostile in the establishment as more children are affected than we previously suspected or knew". Dr. Leonard McEwen, a specialist in food intolerance was also involved in the study. Since the hospital did not want to believe the theory that food and diet had such an impact on behaviour they asked an independent consultant immunologist and research scientist from Germany, Dr. Stephen Strobell to be part of the assessing team. The Police Superintendent of West York, Chief Peter Bennett, was also involved in assessing the young offenders' behaviour. The behaviour of the young recidivists was so dramatically improved by the change in diet that he recommended that regular offenders be tested for food intolerance.

Similar observations were reported in the U.S. by Alexander Schauss, author of *Diet, Crime and Delinquency* in 1980. The book is in our library.

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Food Sources

Bread without yeast, sugar, oil. Made from potatoes, salt, and a high protein unbleached white flour (called Hickory flour), this bread actually tastes good. Presently available for \$1.99 a loaf on Saturdays only at the Great Harvest Bread Co., 194 Robertson Road, Bells Corners (820-4052).

Fast frozen, free flowing wild **blueberries** are sold annually in the Fall. We hope these will again be available this year. The cost is \$21. for 10 lbs. Anyone interested, call Estelle at 825-4439 in early September or, better still, call now while you think about it. Must be **pre-paid**. Spread the word! - they are sooo..... good!

In our library is the 1994 **Canadian Organic Growers' Producers List** - meats, organically raised wild boar, goat, vegetables, grains, herbs, perennials, maple syrup and honey. Some are OCIA certified. Buy your maple syrup and honey in glass containers as plastic does permeate foods, doubly so when hot liquids are poured into plastic containers, as is the case with these two foods.

Organic beef, chickens, rabbits through our AEHA freezer. Call Linda Phillips at 837-2661 to place your order by the third Saturday of each month. Orders to be picked up at Judy Spence's, 536 Dovercourt Ave., (728-5069) the first Saturday of each month.

Orleans Organic Farmers' Market

Location: Ideal Village Co-Op, Orleans Blvd. opposite Orleans United Church (between Jeanne D'arc Blvd. and Fortune Drive)

Every Sunday, 10 AM to 1 PM

Vegetables, fruit, herbs, potted herbs, flowers, baked goods, crafts, essential oils, organic dog, cat and people foods, biodegradable cleaning products, nutritional information and much more!

For information, call: Susan Bright 824-0368 or Johanne Acton 824-0189.

Freezer Facts:

Peppers, tomatoes, leeks do not need blanching before freezing. To avoid pesticide residue and reduce the amount of waxed vegetables you eat in the winter buy your **organic** vegetables in the fall, when prices are low, and freeze them. For tomatoes, just core the stem part and freeze with skins. When you need them, hold under the hot water tap and the skin will peel off. Freeze some of your tomato sauce in ice cube trays then put in freezer bags. These cubes can easily be pried apart. Great for those recipes that call for a small amount only. Keep separate ice cube trays for this purpose.

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Classy Classifieds

A two-storey, two bedroom **house for sale** in Smith Falls. Electric baseboard heaters, non-carpeted floors, outdoor laundry room. Includes a rental bachelor apartment with a separate entrance and bathroom. Owner has a dog. \$69,500. Call Jean at 283-7664.

Johanne (241-2242) is looking for someone to **share** her newly acquired **rowhouse** (end unit) located in a residential area in Cardinal Heights (Chimney Hill Way). Close to shopping and two blocks to bus stop. Forced air electric, no basement. Storage room available. Would have a good size bedroom, with south-west exposure and own bathroom. Parking in driveway. There are carpets. No smoking, perfume, etc. \$475. per month, available August 1st, but date flexible.

Three **face masks** for sale, phone Sue at 731-9509.

Barb has invested in several different brands of unscented **skin lotion/moisturizer products**. Members who would like to test them for tolerance can call Barb at 730-2403. She is not in the business of selling the products, just offering a service.

All Metal Chest Cooler 11 1/2" x 16" - \$8.00. Barb at 730-2403.

Gorgeous Handmade Papers and Book Arts. One of our members, Annegret Nill, has started her own business called **The Paper-trail** (see ad.). Annegret has exhibited her art internationally. All kinds of papers are made: stationery, greeting cards, wedding

invitations, birth announcements, menus, report covers. Laid and wove papers, decorated and laminated, garden weed and kitchen scrap papers and the ultimate in personal indulgence: custom papers. Her papers contain **no wood pulp**. Made from cotton from the Carolinas, milkweed from Montebello, Abaca from Asia, jute and sisal from Africa, flax from Flanders and grass from the garden, or scraps from the dinner table! Visit the gallery. Hours 10 am-6 pm (9 pm Wed) closed Sundays. Items available also at The Papery, on the Market, and Harbour Recycled Store. Papermaking demonstrations and workshops are given, including a one-day workshop for students. Members interested in a group visit or a 6-hour workshop (5 to 8 persons is \$70., supplies included) call our workshop coordinator, Kathy Dickinson at 838-3106.

Vitamins for sale at half price: Call Gilbert Daze at 722-0888. Chromium GTF by Genestra Seroyal, Gingko by Li Chung Yun, Cal-Mag and Pathothenic acid with licorice power, 250 mg, by Quest, Haberman's Leci-caps.

Have your **hair cut and blow dried** in your home. Clients are responsible for washing their own hair. \$20. all inclusive. Marika is available on Tuesdays or Wednesdays, tel: 721-9283. Janet will serve downtown clients only, tel: 829-1868. Krista will serve Orleans only, tel: 744-1346.

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Product Information

The Cotton Place (P.O. Box 59721, Dallas, TX 75229). The 1994 catalogue is in our library. They specialize in products suitable for persons with chemical sensitivities. 100% **organic** cotton nightwear, leisurewear, Naturalguard barrier cloth, bedding items.

A list of **(U.S.) Organic Cotton Sources** is in our library. For a copy send a stamped and self-addressed envelope to the librarian. Remember that the cost of any item ordered from the U.S. will end up twice the price quoted in the catalogue once you add duty, shipping fees, US exchange and brokerage fee to a courier.

The AEHA Nova Scotia Branch Winter 93 newsletter advertizes that one of their members has arranged to get a **discount** from the American Environmental Health Foundation, Inc., which is associated with the EHC in Dallas, so that she can sell their products **locally** plus providing acceptable receipts for income tax purposes. Would anyone in the Ottawa area be willing to undertake this service for AEHA Ottawa area members?

At Robin Kay Home and Style (276 Queen St. W. (585-7731) and 348 Danforth Ave., (466-1211) Toronto, the designer's Awear clothing collection is knit from pure, **unbleached** combed cotton. Kay also uses the **genetically dyed** cotton developed by Sally Fox. The fibre is **organically** grown in tones of soft green, brown and beige-toned natural palette. ("Where" - Apr 94).

Unbleached cotton T-shirts, handbags, etc. are available at The Arbour Recycled Store, 800 Bank St., - 567-3168. T-shirts from **organically** grown cotton are sometimes available too.

The latest in designer labels are Firestone and Goodyear as recycled **inner tubes** become haute couture! Products under the label Extredz include belts, handbags, water bottle carriers and even **clothing** - vests, skirts, jackets (Where-Apr 94). In other news,

carpet underpads are being manufactured from recycled tires! **The environmentally friendly green tag** in these cases means recycled - it says nothing about how polluted these materials are. Another one to watch: Fortrel's EcoSpun, a fleece fabric, is made from recycled plastic pop bottles. Buyer beware. Read your labels carefully and use your best tool - your nose!

MOSQUITO HEAD NET - BUG OFF SHIRT & PANTS - Protect yourself from mosquitoes and blackflies when gardening or camping by using these light, tight-weave nylon mesh mosquito shirts & pants. The shirt features a net hood, a velcro-secured removable face shield (easy to see through) and cuffed sleeves. The pants are reinforced at the knees. Head Net \$16.95 - Shirt \$39.95 - Pants \$37.95 - repl. face shield, non glare \$1.95. **Lee Valley Tools Ltd.**, 1080 Morrison Dr., Tel: 596-0350. Catalogues: P.O. Box 6295, Stn J, Ottawa, Ont. K2A 1T4. (1-800-668-1807).

UNBLEACHED 100% COTTON BED-SHEETS - Twin flat \$22.50 - double \$40.50 - queen \$55. - king \$72. - pillow cases \$33.50 - duvet (queen) \$124. at "Naturally Urban" 297A Richmond Rd., Ottawa, K1Z 6X3. (729-9274) Open every day - Sunday 12 to 5 pm.

100% DUVET COVERS - COTTON COMFORTERS - with **cotton filling** - machine washable and tumble dry - Queen \$95 - Single \$69. -duvet, single \$69. Cotton night dresses and cotton material by the meter. (unfortunately the store smells of incense). Pennies from Heaven, 1154 Bank St., Ottawa, K1S 5X6 tel:730-0589. (From: Alice Kopp).

NEW FIBRE - TENCEL - Tencel is a natural fibre produced from wood pulp harvested from replenished tree farms. This revolutionary process emits no harmful pollutants (this doesn't mean the trees have been

"naturally" or "organically" grown but that the process does not produce pollutants). Made in Canada. Casual Connection (#246) at Eaton's.

Factory Outlet SILK LINGERIE under the name Silkwear at Hidden Secrets, 951 Gladstone Ave., 3rd Floor. The quality of silk is graded by "mommies". The word is pronounced Mo-me, and is a Chinese measure for the weight of silk. Thin silk shirts are usually 10 "mommies" or less. All of the silk from Silkwear is 19 mommies. Also available are Swiss cotton, actually made with cotton from Egypt, is more expensive than silk but doesn't shrink. Hours: Fri 4-6 pm; Sat 11am-4pm. Closed Sunday (722-6838).

PAINT SOURCES: Refer to Eco-Sense Fall 1993, for information on no/low VOC paints, sealers and wood finishes. Warning: If you don't like the limited colour selection available in these paints, the tints you add contain VOCs. Some paints not only reduced the VOCs (Volatile Organic Compound) but also sharply reduced storage biocide. This means that the paint may have only about a six-month shelf life, and after it's opened, it may become contaminated by bacteria in as little as 60 days. German companies such as Livos, Auro and Biofa produce latex and oil paints with little or no biocide, no heavy metals as pigments or drying agents and, usually, plant-based oils as solvents. "An odorous natural product like citrus terpene may, in fact, be more irritating to some people than a synthetic substitute, and turpentine, derived from conifers, is a mean VOC" says our president, Ed Lowan. Livos, the most widely available brand in Canada, augments its citrus-oil solvent with a highly refined, low-aromatic petroleum product that is also used in hand cleanser. (*Harrowsmith*, Oct 93). Be forewarned that these products are expensive.

VACUUM: a new vacuum called **Vita-Vac**. The durable metal design prevents dust and

odors from bypassing the filters. It has four filters. (1) Hygienic filter: this hygienically sealed bag inhibits the growth of mold, mildew, bacteria and fungi (in the bag). (2) The Cellulose bag filter removes 72% of the particles at 0.3 microns and virtually all larger particles. (3) a thick activated charcoal filter absorbs many odors and gases. (4) the HEPA-type filter (High Efficiency Air Filter) removes over 99% of particles 0.3 microns in size. Bacteria are 0.3 to 30 microns and pollen is 10 to 100 microns - this filter makes the Vita-Vac effective as an air cleaner. Vita-Vac claims to be the only vacuum to meet the requirements of the Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers for purified air qualities. Less expensive than other reputable HEPA vacuums. For a Vita-Vac representative call 1-800-848-2649. Information in library.

Reminder: Before investing a large sum of money on any item or appliance, choose to rent a new machine (used ones may already be contaminated) with the option to buy. New "anything" will offgas an odour for a while.

ZEOLITE: Ref: AEHA Quarterly, Summer 93 (p.24). Zeolite is a natural mineral that literally takes odours out of the air - (a naturally-occurring alumina silicate compound with a negative ionic charge). Absorbs ammonia, formaldehyde, hydrogen sulfide, carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide. Trade names are Sodor, Fresh, Nonscents and Natura. Available at Arbour Recycled Store. Can be ordered in quantities of 20 kg. Zeolite is available in powder or rock form. \$1.95 for 500 ml. The rock form can be recharged with the sun.

Nature Clean Laundry Soap has changed to a less powdery formula; however, some members have detected a chemical odour to the new product.

Gardening Tips

Calling all **novice gardeners**. Learn how to grow beautiful vegetables, flowers and learn how to fend natural enemies such as cutworms, root maggots, cabbage loopers, etc. all organically. The Canadian Organic Growers (COG) may offer a course in organic gardening in the fall, if numbers warrant it; (Bells Corners). If interested call Estelle at 825-4439.

Nature's Healing Herbs - Madeline Deitrich is offering two weekend workshops, Creating a *Herbal First Aide Kit* (July 16) & *Herbs for Immune Strength* (July 17). Each workshop runs from 10-4 and is given at one of the Wakefield area's original homesteads. For more information or to register, call 749-4171.

For those of you trying to outwit visiting **ambulatory vegetable crunchers** in your vegetable garden, such as rabbits, ground-hogs, raccoons, try a sprinkle of the hot type of chili powder on the flowers or vegetables bordering your garden. They won't nibble for long! Sprinkle again after a rain.

COG Ottawa Reference Series: These 4-page (50 cents) and 8-page (\$1) folders are designed to give advice to members and the public on various aspects of organic gardening and farming. Nine of the folders are specifically for gardeners. The whole set of 16 papers is only \$10, plus postage \$2.50. RS14/94, "Vegetable Garden Pest Control" by George Bushell is 8 pages for \$1 plus 50 cents postage. Available at the Organic Growers Market, 640 Island Park Dr., or from COG, Box 6408, Stn J, Ottawa, K2A 3Y6. Voice Mail 788-3211.

Organic Fertilizer: A new product, called Planet Safe, uses the nutrients found in fish, minus the smell. It's totally organic peat-based fertilizer. It is safe, hygienic, of high quality and will be three times more efficient than some chemical fertilizers, said Sukhy Mathur, a retired scientist from Agriculture

Canada. The N.P.K. rating is 3-2-1. It won't burn your plants. (Citizen, Apr 30, 94). Also available is a "Growing Mix" (\$6.95/15 litres) available at Artistic Garden Centre and Peter Knippel Nursey, both on Bank St., and at Domus Gardens on Murray St. One of our members, Barb Bellin, finds she can tolerate this potting mixture while others labelled "sterilized" seemed to be heavily contaminated with moulds.

Barb (730-2403) will sell activated charcoal in small quantities to members. See last Quarterly page 37 re plants and mold.

Oh Charles you can't be all that bad since you're interested in organic gardening! Highgrove is a royal laboratory for organic gardening and farming. Less than two kilometres down the road from Highgrove is the "**farm**" where offspring of Highgrove's Aberdeen Angus cattle and lambs are raised for the organic meat trade. In 1990, Prince Charles decided to make the farm fully organic and the conversion is three-quarters completed. Taking farmland off a pesticide and synthetic-fertilizer regime is a lengthy process.

Humanizing (womanizing?) the Bull: "There is already a bull named Herman with human milk-producing protein genes in him. He has now sired his first female calves who are expected to produce milk human input-style in due course. The infant formula industry is delighted". COG'S *Down to Earth* Mar/Apr 94.

PESTICIDES

A higher incidence of cancer (esp. prostate) has been found in men employed as lawn care workers at golf courses. Pesticides were suspected as the cause. Source: WOKR Rochester Live at Five News.

Six years ago, the U.S. Congress asked the National Academy of Science to investigate pesticides in regard to children. The result is a recently released report called

"*The Diets of Infants and Children*". It is felt that infants and children are not sufficiently protected from pesticides. They plan to use the findings as a basis to reform American pesticide laws. Although the U.S. recommendations are being considered by Health Canada, announcement to act on them has yet to come. (*MarketPlace*, Feb 94). **Write your M.P. and demand action soon.**

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Hooray, Hooray

by Lynda Brooks

In January 1979, while working at an Ottawa-area hospital, I was sprayed with perfume by another nurse. Although my immediate reaction to the perfume was severe, I would wait for years before applying for compensation. My claim was delayed by a reluctance to use the system and a belief that I would soon be healthy again. This belief proved to be false, as it was based on denial.

When making a claim with Workers' Compensation, it is necessary to go through several levels of hearings prior to appearing before the tribunal. This series of hearings takes place over a number of years. At each hearing, the onus was on me and my lawyer to prove that the accidental spraying had caused my immediate reaction and was continuing to cause my ongoing illness. Looking back, I believe the process would have gone more quickly and smoothly if I had applied right away, if I had completed all the appropriate forms right away and if I had brought forward witnesses to the incident. Unfortunately only hindsight is 20/20.

My case was also impeded by the fact that, at that point in my life, I was my own worst enemy. Even though I knew that the perfume spraying had profoundly changed my life, doubts crept in. I kept asking myself: What if I get better? Were there other factors involved? Were my reactions real? Yet, even with such negativity, my reaction when offered only 3% of my indexed salary was a sense of betrayal. Although the decision handed down made me question the credibility of my claim even more than before, I did decide to pursue an appeal. Having made that decision, I faced going through the whole process again. What I did right this time was find myself a lawyer who specialized in Workers' Compensation cases. I think the

most important thing he did was put the case into perspective both for me and for the panel at the tribunal. I was now able to answer the questions that counted: What were the differences between my life before and after the accident? How would I compare my life with that of the average person in today's society? After working on my self-esteem and sense of self-worth, I was also able to enter the hearing knowing that I had honestly taken all possible steps to a healthy life and that I no longer had to justify my claim to myself or to others. I recognized that my case was worthy of compensation. I let go of the victimization. I was open and honest and I trusted in God to look after me. Over fifteen years, I made two journeys: one through hearings and tribunals, the other within myself and, at the end of each, I was rewarded.

Lynda Brooks, R.N., is a member of the Addiction Intervention Association, Holistic Nurses Association, and Canadian Association for Nurses in Independent Practice. She offers workshops, individual counselling & continuing care for chemical dependency, codependency & Adult Children.

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Planning A Successful Hospital Stay

by Nancy Charette

Earlier this year I had the experience of going to the Grace hospital for minor surgery. Although I would not be staying at the hospital overnight, I wanted to prepare myself properly in order to ensure that I would encounter as few problems as possible with these temporary surroundings.

I was very grateful that someone had previously sent me a copy of the "Guidelines for Hospital Care of Allergic/Hypersensitive Adults"; I, therefore, had my local doctor send a copy of the guidelines to the specialist who would be attending me at the Grace. Next, I went to the hospital itself for pre-admission scheduling - a common procedure these days. During this visit, I found the head nurse to be very helpful. She remarked to me that the staff at the Grace hospital would certainly be seeing more people with chemical sensitivities.

The staff turned out to be very accommodating. Although I was initially scheduled to have the surgery at 11 am, the nurses agreed to re-schedule the procedure for first thing in the morning. At that time of day the hospital would not yet be filled with the smells of medication and cleaning fluid.

The head nurse of the recovery wing also helped me test several bandages in order to find one which I could tolerate. I also spoke with the Head of Housekeeping, as it is customary for them to clean the room thoroughly after each patient. After our discussion, the housekeeping staff proceeded to air out the room in which I was staying, an accommodation for which I was very thankful.

Staff members also made an effort to make me feel comfortable in another way: One nurse related to me that she knew of another patient with an allergy to perfume, while the

Head of Pharmaceuticals told me that she had previously heard of people with chemical sensitivities.

Of course, in addition to an understanding hospital which, through accommodation of your needs, doesn't add to the level of sickness you had before you arrived, we can also not forget the importance of the doctor within each of us. Pray or meditate - it does wonders for a speedy recovery.

Ref: AEHA Quarterly Vol II, No. 2 1989 "Making my operation work for me" and AEHA Quarterly Vol VX, No. 2 (Summer 1993) "A survival guide for hospitalization".

Thank You

I would like to say a very special Thank You to Elizabeth Stutt, Lesliac Rotor and my husband Henry Phillips for the exceptional job they did on the presentation to the Eastern Ontario Liberal Caucus on June 17, 1994. Elizabeth and Lesliac worked very hard and spent many long hours putting the presentation together.

I would also like to thank all the people who worked at preparing the "Hospital Guidelines for the Care of Persons with Allergies and Environmental Sensitivities" and the booklet entitled "Accommodating the Needs of Students with Environmental Sensitivity." These along with the presentation "On Behalf of Persons with Environmental Sensitivities" given by Elizabeth Stutt made an excellent information package, one that we as an association can be very proud of.

Our delegation was complimented by members of the Liberal caucus for their excellent and very professional presentation. Thank you again, you did us proud.

Linda Phillips

HOSPITAL GUIDELINES

The proposed Hospital Guidelines for the Care of Persons with Allergies and Environmental Sensitivity submitted to AEHA Ottawa by the Canadian Society for Environmental Medicine (C.S.E.M.) have been updated.

A revised "Draft" copy can be obtained, for \$3.00 from the AEHA Ottawa Librarian, for anyone facing hospitalization/surgery in the near future. The final version will be available as soon as concurrence by C.S.E.M., National and other AEHA branches has been received.

The 11-page Hospital Guidelines consists of:

- 1) an Introduction
- 2) an 18-point Summary of Guidelines
- 3) Admission Arrangements
- 4) Environmental Control Measures covering: air, particulates, biologicals, volatile organic compounds, food and water
- 5) Medications, General Principles
- 6) Treatment of Reactions
- 7) Surgery
- 8) an extensive Reference of books and papers
- 9) Appendix "A" - Adverse Reaction Report Form.

The updating of the Hospital Guidelines was a beautiful exercise in cooperation and many thanks go to those who contributed, in a big or small way. Thanks to Elizabeth, Estelle, Judy S., Leslirae, Lynda B., Christine C. and Kathy.



My Experience With New Car Purchases and Sensitivities

by Leslirae Rotor

People with chemical and/or mould sensitivities have extra considerations when purchasing a car. These considerations mean extra research. Since last fall, I have, unfortunately, had to go through this process twice as a result of a car accident. The experiences other people with sensitivities shared have helped me, as I hope this article may help some of you. Any decision-making process takes into account numerous factors which form an organic whole so it has been difficult, for the purpose of this article, to separate out only those which had to do with sensitivities.

New or Used: Initially, I assumed that we would buy a used car. My sensitivities have improved over many years and I had no desire to risk losing hard-won progress with a car that made me sick. Planning to buy in November made tolerability even more imperative since there would be no possibility of leaving windows open and we were planning at least one long trip at Christmas. However, other considerations for this purchase (reliability and crash protection factors and financial/value considerations) which I had assumed would lead me, as in the past, to buying a used car indicated that it would be better to buy new this time. I was annoyed - it was enough of a challenge to find a used car which met our criteria and which was well off-gassed, owned by non-smokers who didn't input chemicalized treatments, etc. I figured it would be close to impossible to find a sufficiently tolerable new car.

I decided to consult Lynda Brooks. To my surprise, she told me that she had been able to find an acceptable new car and that there had been striking differences between the new cars she'd examined. Some cars had fabric and materials which it seemed would **never** off-gas adequately; others appeared more tolerable from the start. She noted that many car manufacturers buy from the same

suppliers and that certain themes were repeated - for example, particular colours and textures of upholstery or carpeting would be more (or less) tolerable in several makes or models that year.

Seasonal Considerations: The timing of a purchase may be a consideration. In late fall, many manufacturers are clearing their old model years and the cars left generally have had the maximum off-gassing period possible while still remaining "new". The manufacturing date is on the inside of the driver's door on a small metal plate. The longer since the manufacturing date, the better, although a car which has been opened up, had the plastic removed and been in the sun will have off-gassed more than one which has remained closed up. On the down side, a late fall purchase does mean that the first six months will be spent with the windows closed for much of the time.

Challenge Testing: Once I had narrowed down the list of cars I was willing to consider (on the basis of crash protection, reliability, size, luggage capacity and relative price/value) it was time for my "sniff tests" to determine how severe my chemical reactions were to the various possible cars. It is of little use to test for individual reactions inside of a showroom - the often dismal air quality confuses identification of the source of some reactions while possibly masking others. I recommend doing sniff tests in the open air of the lot or storage compound and doing not more than two or three at a time (stopping completely for the day or until recovery if severe reactions occur). As soon as possible, jot down any reactions and comparative rankings.

It is necessary to have a salesperson involved, like it or not, because cars on the lot are normally locked. Not all salespeople are very receptive to the idea that their new

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(filter life: * 6 to 12 months)

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cars make some people very ill. One needs to appear seriously interested without necessarily committing oneself to even a test drive if one whiff causes a negative reaction. One GM/Japanese hybrid that I was sure was my front-runner based on price, reliability, and crash protection (Dodge Colt) was knocked off my list the second the salesman opened the door.

If you find a car to which your reactions are fairly manageable, you may be willing to risk a test-drive. On the other hand, you may choose to sniff test all your top candidates before deciding which to consider test-driving. I recommend test-driving cars with the windows closed for the full effect, and running the heater for part of the test drive as fumes from the heater can be a significant problem in many cars (possibly more so the first few times it is used, but some get worse with age). A long test-drive of serious prospects is important. One car I test-drove (a Honda Civic) which I initially thought wasn't too bad produced adverse reactions several minutes into the test drive.

Options: Some people with Environmental Sensitivities find air conditioning helpful since it filters the air to some extent. If this is your main reason for considering this expensive option (often costing up to \$2,000) a more inexpensive alternative is to purchase a separate unit specifically designed for air purification in cars. You will need to check your tolerance to such a unit (make sure you check it when it is **operating** and with fresh filtration materials), but a good purifier is likely to do the job significantly more effectively at a lower overall cost and with fewer contaminants such as mould spores, chemical materials, etc. (Tibbits has one such system but there may be other serious contenders.) The drawback to this approach is that on hot sunny days, either the windows must be opened (and your air purifier will not do much) or the windows must be closed, then you need cooling. Having both systems

(if you can afford it) would be great. I do without both and keep my windows opened.

Dealer Preparation: Most salespeople will go along with any eccentricity a customer demonstrates provided they've got a sale and it doesn't cost them anything extra. Although they may appear willing to accommodate your sensitivities, they may not take it seriously enough to follow through or to ensure that others do. Remember to specify that no chemical contaminants are to be introduced inside the passenger compartment during dealer preparation. You may be able to persuade them to **not** clean the inside of the vehicle in order to avoid having them introduce chemical cleaners, but they are required to do the rest of the pre-delivery inspection and they may proceed with cleaning just out of habit.

The first time I bought I explained that I wanted no chemical cleaners, sprays, waxes, powders, etc. used inside the passenger compartment or trunk. I also explicitly specified that only water, unscented plain detergent or vinegar and water for the windows was to be used. However, when I picked up the car there was a definite chemical odour not previously present in any of the cars of the same model that I'd examined. To me, it smelled of wax, but the salesperson insisted that no wax had been used; however, he did admit that they'd used a commercial Windex product called "Vinegar and Water" or some such thing! Had that been the **only** aberration from my request, it should have out-gassed in hours or, at most, a few days but I continued to react while in the car for about 3 weeks. Even after it dissipated there was still the lingering off-gassing of the car itself.

In March, when I purchased a second car, there were, unfortunately, no basic 1993 cars left; I was forced to buy a 1994. The out-gassing of the basic car has been somewhat worse than that for the 1993. However, what was better was my experience with the dealership. After my previous experience, I

was concerned about simply leaving written instructions on the order form and/or explaining the matter to the salesperson. I requested to speak directly to the person who would do the cleaning. However, the salesperson assured me he would look after the matter personally, and did in fact do a fine job! The car had been well aired before I arrived and I detected no chemicals beyond those inherent to the car.

Coping with and Accelerating the Off-gassing of Your New Car: Whenever possible drive with the windows down so that the contaminated air is diluted with outside air (except, of course, when in heavy traffic or if you have an adequate air purifier). If you can, leave the windows open when the car is not in use. Leave the car inside a locked garage with all windows open. In our situation, with no garage but lots of snow and potential theft problems, the only option was to leave the car under the carport with the windows open a crack. This did help.

In addition, I filled pans with baking soda and placed them under the car seats. These were changed every couple of days. I also filled a pan with activated charcoal and another with potassium permanganate to absorb the chemical off-gassing and placed these in the car. The potassium permanganate was changed only when the spheres had turned from purple to brown, and were brown all the way through when crushed. At that point they were no longer helping to absorb chemicals. I suspect that potassium permanganate works better at warmer temperatures, since there was little change in colour in the spheres as they sat in my car outside in the cold weather. It may not be worth the cost of using potassium permanganate in winter unless you have a filtration unit which forces heated air through the spheres continually.

Off-gassing is accelerated by heat and good air circulation. In summer, leave a new car in the sun with the windows open to help bake out the problem. Also, buying a Tidbits

car air cleaner (available at Walmar in the Nepean Industrial Park) and running the car with the heater on, frequently changing the potassium permanganate, improves a car considerably.

My personal findings: Tolerability: I didn't find a perfectly tolerable new car (surprise, surprise); I did, however, find one I tolerate quite well and I am hoping it will be fully outgassed within a few months. Of the cars I tested, I was best able to tolerate (in descending order): 1. Mazda Protege, 2. Nissan Sentra Classic (discontinued in 1993) and 3. Honda Civic. As I recall, the Ford Escort and Hyundai products generally rated next. The worst I found were the Dodge Colt and Geo Metro.

Attitudes: In the end what counts is whether the dealership takes you seriously enough to follow your instructions when preparing the car. In this regard, I have only two experiences on which to draw. I give credit to Daniel Racicot at Argus Motors in Hull who came through for me. Among all the salespeople with whom I was in contact during my searches, I would rate him most highly. He was genuinely concerned with my satisfaction.

A comprehensive article by Leslirae is available in our library.

* * * * *

Air Conditioners: CFCs and freon in car air conditioners (ozone-layer threateners will be phased out by 1995). Richard Schreck, General Motors' principal research scientist says that "air conditioners turn over the air about every 60 seconds, so you're cleaning out **allergens** very rapidly, whichever unit is in your vehicle". Many new car models (expensive ones) boast special charcoal filters to trap **allergens**, from dust to pollen to fumes and smog (**pollutants**) including road dirt or tiny fibers from carpeting, seat and clothing. (Longevity/Sept 93). Hopefully, this technology will be part of less expensive cars

in the future.

Car air conditioners may be a breeding ground for fungi-producing mold spores. A disinfectant, sprayed into the core of the system by a trained mechanic, can keep your car mold-free for several months. Do-it-yourself applications merely deodorize, they don't kill mold spores. (Univ. of California Wellness Letter).

Finding a knowledgeable mechanic is the hard part. One of our members found such a jewel! The core of the system was flushed, three times, with undiluted chlorine and rinsed; the mold problem was eradicated. The smell of the chlorine dissipates in about a week. Another member had a troublesome experience, at another dealership. Having made similar arrangements with one member of the office staff, someone else took over believing they knew better. The owner was told that the dashboard was removed to reach the air conditioner and that it was

thoroughly cleaned. A perfumed disinfectant was used causing allergy problems to the owners for over a month and the procedure was not even successful. It was suggested, by one of the staff members, that although the car was bought new, a recycled air conditioner might have been used! No proof, of course. Eventually a new core had to be installed - an expensive job. The problem is not totally solved partly due, it is believed, to mold between the core and the vent; however, the condition is acceptable at the moment. Make sure you pursue and correct this problem promptly, not only for health reasons. If a new core is installed it is costly, so car dealers tend to take their time resolving this problem, in the hope your warranty will have expired.

Have the dealer enter a **warning** and your specifications in their computer and tape a notice to the dashboard for the mechanic each time the car is in for repair.

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New Grains

Information Source:

Canadian Grains Commission,
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Amaranth Family (Amaranthaceae).

Not a grass; related to "pigweed".

Goosefoot Family

Quinoa. (Andean specie - Incas)

specie: Album - closely related to
Lamb's Quarter (weed)

specie: Chenopodium quinoa - referred
to as pseudo cereal

Grass Family - (Grameneae)

Job's Tears

specie: COIX - lacrima jobi (South East
Africa)

- botanically more related to corn.

- belongs to the same sub-family as
millet

Kamut (G)- Ethiopia -

sub-specie of Triticum Turgedium -
electrophoretically identical to durum
wheat

Millet

specie: proso millet - most common
(large seed)

specie: wild millet or green fox
(birdseeds)

Spelt (G)

specie: spelta - a sub-specie of wheat

Teff: - North and East Africa-

specie: eragrostis- abbyssinica

Grass Family (cont'd)

Triticale (G)

- a cross between wheat and rye

Milo

- known as grain sorghum

- a very primitive grain

where (G) represents gluten

Another Reference in the AEHA Quarterly
- Summer 1993, p. 8 states "Rice, corn,
amaranth, buckwheat, quinoa, milo and teff
contain traces of gluten that are supposedly
"chemically bound". They are referred to as
EGF - essentially gluten free."

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Branch News

Fund-Raising: AEHA will have the Entertainment Books for sale again in the Fall. Remember these make **excellent** Christmas gifts. These restaurants & hotel rebate coupons can be used in the Ottawa area and when travelling. It is a greatly appreciated gift. Contact Kathy Dickinson at 838-3106 to place your order. Spread the word, it's a fund-raising event for AEHA.

An 'Addition List' to the library book list will be included in our next Eco-Sense.

Past newsletters can be purchased at meetings or from the librarian. \$1 for members and \$2.50 for non-members (plus postage).

TRAVEL - Available through AEHA library is a list of **smoke-free accommodations** in Ontario and Nova Scotia.

The Multiple Allergy Revue showed that there is a lot of talent amongst us "canaries". It was great fun. Thanks to all but especially to Judy Spence and Steve Rowat.

There is a recently formed **self-help group** for Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (**CFS**), Fibromyalgia (**FM**) and Environmental Illness (**EI**) sufferers. The group currently meets in Deep River about once a month. Please feel free to contact one of the following - Pat Davey (584-3590) or Maureen or Dave Hunter (584-3970). A specific support group for fibromyalgia is being formed in Pembroke. CFS/FM/EI North Renfrew Self-Help Group, Box 342, Deep River, Ont. K0J 1P0.

Wishes for a prompt recovery from heart surgery to Moira Geller.

We wish to **thank** members who have made **donations** to our branch in the past year - Vieira Jorgeana, Teresa Beaudoin, Chris Brown, Johanne Falardeau, Therese Groulx, Jeannette Jeffrys, Lynne Larson, Lisa Moore, Joanne Bedard, Bonnie Cumming, D.R. Hansen, Joan Jubb. I hope we didn't forget anybody.

The book **The Joy of Health** by Zoltan P. Rona, M.D. M.Sc. has been donated to the AEHA library by Catherine Squire. Many thanks.

Did you remember? Remember what? Look at page 19 of your last Eco-Sense. Got it? Good! Do it!!

DATES TO REMEMBER

McNabb Community Centre, 7.30 p.m.

Thursday, September 15,

Lise Couture,

AURICULAR THERAPY

Thursday, October 20,

Richard Albert

ALEXANDER TECHNIQUE

Thursday, November 17,

Jim White, CMHC,

MOULDS IN YOUR HOME

Summer 1994 Activities:

Electromagnetic Field: A workshop is planned on EMF for the **end of July** to be given by Gary Skillen. Fee: \$10. Call Kathy at 838-3106 to register.

Potluck Supper, July 9th, 1600 hours. Place: Leslirae Rotor, 343 Roxdale Ave. Orleans (830-7968). Bring a dish to serve 6 to 8 people (label ingredients), your own tolerated water and a lawn chair. Rain date July 10th.



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